PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR 1117 AND 1118.

MR. S. NARAYANA AIYAR: I beg to move that the reports of the Public Accounts Committee on the Audit Report and the Appropriation Accounts of 1117 and 1118 M. E., be taken up for consideration.

MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: I rise to a point of order. My point is that the report of the Public Accounts Committee that has been sought to be discussed, is not valid in law for being discussed on the floor of this House for three reasons. In the first place, this report has been submitted by the committee appointed for the year 1120.

Rule 10 of the Public Accounts Committee Supplemental Rules reads :—

> "The Financial Secretary shall, subject to the directions of Government, place annually before the Committee a list of the supplementary grants obtained by Government during the previous year for schemes of new expenditure treated as 'new services' with a request for the opinion of the Committee as to whether they are 'new services' or not."

I lay special emphasis to the portions "the Financial Secretary .....shall place annually before the Committee" and "a list of the supplementary grant obtained by Government *during the previous year* ....." Therefore my submission is that the Public Accounts Committee constituted under Rule 79 of the Travancore Legislative Reforms Rules is competent only to deal with the Audit Report and the Appropriation Accounts of Government for the year 1119 alone and is absolutely not competent to deal with the Audit Report and the Appropriation Accounts of Government for the years 1117 and 1118, as has been done in the present instance. In the second place, under Rule 10, Public Accounts Committee appointed for any one particular year has jurisdiction to deal with the Audit Report and the Appropriation Accounts of Government of one year alone. and the same committee has absolutely no jurisdiction to deal with the Audit Report and the Appropriation Accounts for two years, as has been done by the present committee. The Public Accounts Committee is bound to make a report on the Audit Report and Appropriation Accounts of each year separately and is not competent to make a consolidated Report on the Audit Reports and Appropriation Accounts of 2 years together as the committee has unfortunately chosen to do in the present instance. Therefore my submission is that the report submitted to this House for consideration is *ab initio void* and cannot consequently be discussed by this House. I want a definite ruling on the points raised by me.

MR. K. G. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Advocate-General*): I do not exactly follow the argument of the honourable member on this point. But I understood from him that he objects to the present committee going into the audit report of the current year. The Rule says that the Public Accounts Committee can deal with the audit report of the previous year and.....

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MR. PULIYOOR T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI: I may be permitted to make clear my point.

PRESIDENT: I quite see your point. *Prima facie* I am in favour of the points urged by the honourable member.

MR. K. G. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI: The Public Accounts Committee constituted for the year 1120 have considered the audit report and—

PRESIDENT: Apart from what the Advocate General proposes to say, my views are these. It is very unfortunate that, owing to a series of accidents which should have been avoided, this rather belated presentation of the Public Accounts Committee Report for the deliberations of this House has been made. Mr. Velayudhan Pillai's position is perfectly clear. Under Rule 10 of the Public Accounts Committee (Supplemental) Rules the Financial Secretary shall, subject to the direction of Government, place annually before the committee a list of the supplementary grants obtained by Government during the previous year..... It is also laid down that in scrutinising the Audit and Appropriation Accounts of the Government, it shall be the duty of the committee to satisfy itself that the money voted by the Legislature has been spent within the scope of the demand granted by the Legislature. There is also the fact that the Financial Secretary shall place a list of grants obtained by Government during the previous year. The whole question is whether the new committee constituted for 1120 can sit in a kind of *post mortem* examination of the accounts of the years 1117 and 1118 with the result that any recommendation that the committee might make for those years, cannot possibly be carried into effect. Apart from the point of general academic discussion, that recommendation will have absolutely no bearing upon any business to be transacted for the current year. It is very unfortunate that such a step had to be taken. I am in favour of upholding the point of order.

MR. K. G. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI: The Financial Secretary referred the matter to the Law Officers of Government. Our opinion has been recorded on this particular matter, and only after that the report has come up for discussion.

PRESIDENT: Nobody regrets more than I do such a state of affairs. I trust that any such delay will not be allowed to take place hereafter. I hope steps will be taken to see that the Public Accounts Committee is regarded as vitally important, as it undoubtedly is, in the matter of testing the amounts of expenditure of public moneys hereafter. Sufficient time must be allotted for the discussion of such an important item. I will also see that the Public Accounts Committee is summoned sufficiently early and all the preliminaries conducted with a view to see that objections of this nature do not arise. At present I uphold the point of order. This subject does not arise for discussion.

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MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR: Now the point has been raised by one honourable member whether this House is competent to discuss the report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Audit Report and the Appropriation Accounts of the years 1117 and 1118 M. E., Can we proceed?

PRESIDENT: I have definitely come to the conclusion that the statement of expenditure and the audit report of the accounts of 1117 and 1118 cannot be dealt with by this House, under the Rules. I can only apply the Rules and I am clear on that matter.

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS ACT (AMENDMENT) BILL.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Legal Remembrancer to Government*): Sir, I beg to move that the Travancore Registration of Births and Deaths Act (Amendment) Bill as passed by the Council be taken up for consideration.

MR. S. NARAYANA AIYAR: I second it.

The question that clauses 1 to 7 stand part of the Bill was put and carried. The clauses were added to the Bill.

The question that the preamble and title stand part of the Bill was put and carried. The Preamble and Title were added to the Bill.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

MR. S. NARAYANA AIYAR: I second it.

The motion was put and carried, and the Bill was passed.

THE TRAVANCORE INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS BILL.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, I beg to present the Report of the Select Committee on the Travancore Industrial Statistics Bill and move that the Bill as revised by the Committee be taken up for consideration.

MR. S. NARAYANA AIYAR: I second it.

The question that the Report of the Select Committee on the Travancore Industrial Statistics Bill be taken up for consideration was put and carried.

Clauses 1 to 7.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Sir, I have tabled some amendments to the Bill.

PRESIDENT: But there are no amendments up to clause 7.

The question that clauses 1 to 7 stand part of the Bill was put and carried.

The clauses were added to the Bill.

Clause 8.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Sir, I move that in Clause 8.

"For the words "two hundred and fifty rupees substitute the words "five hundred rupees" and for the words "one hundred rupees" substitute the words "two hundred rupees".

MR. M. L. JANARDHANA PILLAI: Sir, I oppose the amendment. Just for the information of the House, I shall read the relevant portions of the clause, about which the present amendment has been moved. If any person wilfully refuses or without lawful excuse neglets to furnish such information or return or wilfully furnishes or

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